Discussion Notes from “What do professors really say about college writing?” (*English Journal*, January 2011, pgs 75-81)

January 31, 2011

Writing Inquiry Meeting

* Teaching “intellectual risk taking” can be challenging (but is crucial).
* How can we as teachers expand/relax our thinking? (Moving beyond formulas/formats)
* The pressures of standardized assessments – often narrow writing instruction: moving beyond assumptions/generalizations
* Power of range of mentor texts – variety, exemplars, our own writing, that push against formulas/number of paragraphs, etc.
* Back to purpose and audience; ex: summary/5 paragraph serve a purpose (just not all purposes)
* Moving secondary writers away from “fixed frames” of both writing and themselves as writers
* Complexity is key
* “Writers write about what they want to know about” (not just what they already know) – importance of inquiry, reading, background knowledge building to support writing
* Revisiting choice writing – real choices that include moving out of comfort zone.
* What does this summary/critique look like? Approaches to teach this level of thinking?
* Interdisciplinary writing (needed/intentional)
* Using and analyzing sources without plagiarism
* Multiple perspective with research – analyzing sources
* Support for critical thinking/inquiry
* Background knowledge – ways to build through literacy instruction
* Complex thinking is developmental – what are ways to teach into this?